104. Needs of the Trivandrum Municipality.

MR. K. M. GOPALAN NAIR (*Member, Municipal Council, Trivandrum*) said that, as the premier Municipality in the State, Trivandrum had claimed improvements in the conditions of life.

The success of municipal government would depened upon the grant of ample powers. The Trivandrum Municipal Council had been in existence for the past 35 years and distinguished men had served and were serving on it. The appointment of a non-official chairman is most imperative. The official chairman cannot, owing to his training and temperament, command the confidence of the deliberative assembly like the Trivandrum Municipal Council. All other municipal councils had been given elected presidents; and it could not be denied that there were suitable non-officials in the town. As a result of repeated representations in the Assembly and a lengthy correspondence, the Municipality agreed about two years and a half ago to accept the Government's view that when a non-official chairman is appointed, the chief executive officer should be of the grade of the Dewan Peishkar. In letter R. O. C. No. 1197, dated the 17th December 1925, the Government had, however, in reply to a deputation stated that they do not propose to consider any modification of the existing system. The Council had not yet received any reply to the request for another deputation being received by the Dewan. A casual visit to a meeting of the Council would show that an Official President of the status of a Tahsildar or Division Assistant cut a poor figure.

The town limits remained the same as at the formation of the Town Improvement Committee. Measures for the relief of congestion and promotion of public health were urgently required. The town should be extended and the offices located in different quarters. Houses should be built on the western side of the Chakkai Railway Station for the use of the low-paid subordinates of Government. The scheme of town planning prepared by Mr. Dann should be considered.

The drains were very insanitary and the sewage system was unsatisfactory. There was the dual control by the Municipality and the Public Works Department. The gutters were used as public latrines; and without a good water-supply, flushing was out of the question. Elephantiasis was becoming more and more common. The channel leading from Puttarikandam along Pazhavangadi, Kutiravattam and Vanchiyur to Kannanmula was a breeding ground for mosquitos. If the Government would arrange for clearing the vegetation along the channel and construct parapet walls on either side, up to the Kutiravattam road, the Council would try to maintain it in a proper condition.

There was urgent necessity to widen the roads, lanes and by-paths in the town. Delay would add to the cost and difficulties of acquiring additional land. The road from the Science College to Bhaktivilas should be immediately widened as accidents were of common occurrence. The necessity for broadening the Chalai road or, in the alternative, constructing a parallel road had been urged several times before. The lane from Kalippankulam to Sinkaratoppu should be widened at once. Immediate attention should also be paid to widening the lane running from the Elavaniya Street to Panamudu junction along the east of the Royal Stables. The improvement of this road for cart traffic would facilitate access from Chalai to the Municipal markets at Manakkad; the decision of the Government not to acquire lands at their cost for widening the lane should be reconsidered. The Tengapura lane, the lane from Mukkolakkal to Valiaturai and the Chettikulam lane required immediate improvement. A new road from Sankumukham to Valiaturai along the beach should be opened.

The importance of an adequate supply of good water to the town cannot be over-emphasised. The water-works should be expedited. The public tanks were in a miserable condition and should be improved.

The suggestions of Mr. Padmanabha Menon, Electrical Engineer, regarding electric lighting for the town should be given effect to.

The Puttarikandam should be converted into a public park. The swamp on the southern side of the Chalai road should also be filled up. A park should be opened near the beach also.

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The accommodation in the Municipal office was inadequate and unsatisfactory. Requests to the Government for the provision of a suitable building had been of no avail. Early orders should be passed on the resolution of the Council, passed on the 4th Dhanu 1101, forwarding plans and estimates for the new building.

For putting into operation a scheme for the supply of milk to the town prepared by the Registrar of Co-operative Societies and the Director of Ayurveda, the Council should be given 30 acres of land at Pujapura or Perukkada.

Medical inspection of school children was not being attended to as carefully as it should be.

It was believed that the extension of the railway to Nagercoil would be an accomplished fact soon. The central station should not be in the heart of the town but at Manakkad according to the line already surveyed.

DEWAN'S REPLY: Mr. Gopalan Nair, you have said a great deal on the subject of a non-official president for the Trivandrum Municipality. This, as you say, came up before the Government many a time in the past; and, in the very near past, I may tell you, in December last, a deputation from the Municipality asked permission to wait upon me to press this point. You are here, I understand, speaking on behalf of the Trivandrum Municipality. Then, what I say to you will also serve as my answer to the deputation, and that is, I do not propose to make any change in the headship of the Municipality unless and until I have been able to watch the working of the Municipality carefully for a longer period than eight months.

MEMBER: The Municipality has been asking for a non-official president for a very long time.

DEWAN: The gift will be all the more valuable for waiting for a longer period. There is therefore no necessity for a deputation.

2. Then I see there are many matters in which you turn round to the Government and say "Will the Government do this? Will the Government grant this? Will the Government pay for this?" Such matters are the sewage system, town planning, water supply, municipal offices, dairy farm and so on. Municipal offices all the world over are built by the municipalities themselves. You would like the Government to build it for you.

MEMBER: Trivandrum is the premier municipality in the State and hence it deserves a preferential treatment.

DEWAN: I do not agree with you there for one moment. The London County Council and other local authorities have built their own offices. You want the Government to build your house for you. May I suggest, if you are not prepared to utilise your own money for it, to borrow money for it?

MEMBER: We have no funds.

DEWAN: I am not prepared to discuss here the financial condition of the Trivandrum Municipality.

3. You are even prepared to start a dairy farm; but you want Government to give you 30 acres of land. You want a water supply and you are very pleased that the Government have taken the thing upon their shoulders for the good of the people of Trivandrum because the Municipality did not or would not or could not begin to see to the matter themselves.

MEMBER: That was not what I said, but—

DEWAN: I am not debating the point.

4. You want certain lanes and by-paths widened; you want certain sewage drains cleared up, you want better sanitary services generally and again you would like the Government to do all that. These are all matters which I am glad you have voiced here in public not merely for the information of the Government, but also for the edification of Members from all municipalities all over the country. Let them see what our premier municipality has been doing and to what extent Government help is necessary for the fulfilment of the high aims and creditable desires of

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the Municipality. All these points will not be lost sight of. They will be carefully recorded and considered when questions affecting the Trivandrum Municipality come up before the Government from time to time.

105. Needs of the Neduvangad taluk.

MR. KANAKKU PARAMESVARAN PILLAI KESAVA PILLAI (*Member, Neduvangad taluk*) said that the pace at which *puduval* lands had been registered minimised the facilities for grazing cattle and made it difficult to obtain green-leaf manure. The forest authorities did not allow grazing or collection of green-leaf manure from reserved forests. The areas set apart as grazing reserves were mostly inaccessible and contained no grass or were subject to fires during summer. Encroachments had with impunity been made on the grazing grounds, as for example, survey Nos. 1238, 2697 and 2698 in the Neduvangad *pakuthi*, survey No. 2920 in the Anad *pakuthi* and survey Nos. 914 and 857 in the Vempayam *pakuthi*.

Irrigation facilities were not adequate. Storage tanks are few and neglected. No action was taken to evict trespassers who had encroached on some of these tanks. The Kolayikonathu *chira* and Kolakkot *chira* situated within less than a mile of the Taluk Cutcherry were silted up. Though the Government accepted the resolutions of Mr. T. Kumara Pillai and Mr. T. K. Velu Pillai regarding minor irrigation works discussed in the Legislative Council, no tank had yet been restored or improved in the Neduvangad taluk. The production of food stuff should be increased by the development of agriculture which required such facilities as were indicated above. More lands should be brought under cultivation by disafforestation from the reserves, and the people of the taluk should be given preference in the matter of registry of such lands.

The Vellanad-Kattakada road, the road from Pazhukutti to the M. C. Road, the road from Aryanad to Kadakadu, and the road from the 13th mile of the Ponmudi road to Venjaramud required immediate attention. The trace from Pothenkod to the 16th mile of the M. C. Road was also in an extremely bad state of disrepair.

The Departments of Agriculture, Forest, Industries and Co-operation should not be allowed to remain as scattered units without any cohesion or continuity o policy. The Economic Development Board was neither supplying the necessary cementing force, nor co-ordinating the activities of the various departments in such a manner that inter-departmental rivalries were permanently removed. Such co-ordination was all the more necessary now that the Revenue Department which used to look after matters of common welfare had dwindled into a mere tax-collecting agency.

The tanks and roads should be improved, grazing reserves should be maintained and the area available for paddy cultivation should be increased by disafforesting swamps. The registry of the lands already thrown out of the reserve should be expedited.

DEWAN'S REPLY : Mr. Kesava Pillai, as you know, a committee was appointed to inspect the reserved forests and to select and report on the areas fit for paddy cultivation in the Kottarakara and Neduvangad taluks. The committee inspected the places and recommended four blocks of land having a total area of 117 acres in the Neduvangad taluk to be made available, and the Government have sanctioned the disafforestation of 50 acres of land. So you will see that a fair amount of land would be thrown open for cultivation in the Neduvangad taluk.

2. The question of the improvement of irrigation tanks will be taken up and considered if and when the ryots make application.

3. There is plenty of land—unreserved areas—from which ryots can take green-leaf manure and there is also a grazing block.

4. The Chief Engineer assures me that the roads you mention will be maintained with special care in future. In regard to some of the others, estimates have been called for.

5. Then you spoke of the improvement of the trace from Pothenkod to the 16th mile of the M. C. Road to render it fit for cart traffic throughout the year. This is a village road the coversion of which into a cart road is not found to be more urgent than numerous other roads all over the country. Therefore, it will have to stand over this year.

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